



U. S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Information



Release - Immediate.

MALLARDS BEST FOR WILD DUCK FARMS.

Industry Should Be Developed to Supplement the Decreasing
Natural Supply of Game.

Washington, D. C.

Raising mallard ducks is an in-

dustry which should be developed as extensively as possible in order to
supplement the decreasing natural supply of game, according to a bulletin
recently published by the United States Department of Agriculture. The
ease with which the mallard can be bred makes it the best species for
wild duck farming, and its beauty, popularity, hardiness, adaptability
and fecundity fit it as no other duck is fitted to be the game duck of
the future.

(Editors:- The additional details below are for publications
desiring more particulars.)

Only one-tenth of the food of mallard ducks is derived from the animal
kingdom and about nine-tenths from the vegetable, according to the bulletin
which is a report of a study of the natural food habits of this valuable game
bird. The study was made to assist those who are propagating mallards in a
semidomesticated condition, to provide proper feed for them, and to enable
the improvement of bodies of water and marshes as feeding grounds for wild
ducks. It was found that they feed mostly on the sedges, water grass, smart-
weeds, pondweeds, duckweeds, coontail, and other semiaquatic plants. In the
stomach of one mallard was found 102,400 seeds of primrose willow. They also
feed some on water beetles, bugs, and dragonflies.

The bulletin, number 720, also discusses the food habits of the dusky or
black duck and the southern black duck which are closely related to the mallard,
though not as important.

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